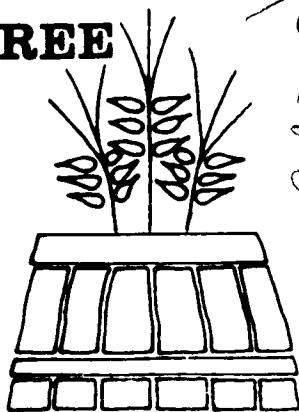


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# The Campaign For Real Ale **HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER**

January 1979 • Number 12

## **BEER PRICES SET TO SOAR**

As most beer drinkers are aware, there is a strong possibility that beer prices could soon rise - by up to five pence per pint. The big brewers will submit applications for sizeable increases to the Price Commission this month, which ends the twelve month freeze on prices agreed last year by the brewers and Prices Secretary, Roy Hattersley. Although the brewers are non-committal on the subject, a 3p increase in the price of a pint is the sort of figure that they are planning. By the time landlords have added an extra penny or two to maintain their profit margins beer could well increase by 5p a pint with South east England probably receiving the stiffest increases. Rising costs of barley, electricity and transport, plus a 27% wage rise awarded to bar staff, are the reasons given by the brewers for applications but on the other hand many of Britain's big brewers have been announcing record profits - Bass-Charrington recently reported £105 million in profits. Of course, it is not yet known whether the Price Commission will agree to any increases but the brewers argue that it was implicit in the 12-month freeze that prices would rise as soon as it ended. If an increase is permitted it will make a mockery of 'the freeze' as they will have recovered last year's frozen prices in one go. The 50p pint could soon be a reality in some pubs. With the prospect of an increase in excise duty - the tax on beer - as part of a spring budget to offset cuts in income tax, 1979 could prove to be an expensive year for beer drinkers.

### **GREENE KING XX DARK MILD THIS BEER MAY SOON BE XX-TINCT!**

XX sales are dropping, say Greene King, and the brewing of this beer may shortly become uneconomic. This dark mild could disappear in the very near future.

XX is one of the few remaining cask conditioned milds still available in this area. Your choice will be further restricted if XX disappears. Greene King have already phased out the two Rayments milds at their Pelham brewery.

XX is a dark, fruity brew, full of flavour and costing around ten pence less than the heavily promoted Abbot. It is certainly as strong as many lagers and is far better value for money.

XX is not promoted. When did you last see a poster, a beer mat, or indeed any other advertisement for this beer? CAMRA plans to rectify this sorry state of affairs by producing badges, posters and beer mats.

XX dark mild - ask for it in your Greene King pub before it XX - pires.

**WATCH OUT FOR THE XX CAMPAIGN!**

## **FISHERMAN: A Good Catch For Stevenage** By Peter Lerner.

Congratulations to Ind Coope on building a modern pub which is like a pub, and not a Wimpy Bar or a Wild West Saloon. Stevenage has more than its fair share of bleak modern pubs, with as much charm or character as a multi-storey car park, but the Fisherman at Fisher's Green, which re-opened in December after major extensions, is by contrast a credit to its architects.

### **Ex-Benskin**

The Fisherman was once an isolated Benskin beer house, but a new housing development has been built around it and the pub has expanded into a brand new building, the old pub remaining as a store. The new pub is most attractive both outside and in, constructed in good red bricks with black weatherboarding, and set in a garden which should be a pleasant spot for family drinking.

### **Solid Materials**

Inside, the scale has been kept to human proportions and again good solid materials have been used, without an excess of gimmickry. Although this is a one-bar pub, it is pleasing to see that there is a dart board and a real fire-place. Oh yes and, in case you thought I'd forgotten, Ind Coope Bitter and Burton Ale are available from prominently sited handpumps (while the DD keg dispenser is out-of-the-way and hardly visible).

### **Also Locally....**

It looks as if other brewers are also slowly getting the message that cavernous is not comfortable and modern is not necessarily massive. At nearby Symonds Green, the Crooked Billet is presently being tastefully extended and will almost certainly employ handpumps to serve a range of Greene King real ales. Alas, the third pub in this area is a brand new Whitbread emporium. Again Whitbread are several steps behind their rivals.



# A VISIT TO YOUNG'S

By Rob Candlish

Fifteen members of the Herts/Essex Borders Branch visited Young's Brewery in Wandsworth late last year. They were conducted around by Mrs C. Butler, daughter-in-law of Charlie Butler, the famous brewery horse-keeper. At present the brewery is in a state of turmoil with builders improving the existing brewhouse and extending capacity by building another. The party had to weave in and out of piles of bricks and sand in the yard and avoid tilers and painters at work in the old brewhouse. Further obstacles were presented by sacks of malt, hops and 'Burton' water treatment piled in every available corner.

## Brief History

We began in the malt store where Mrs Butler gave us a brief history of the site and of the Young family's involvement in brewing and showed us the brewery's three grist mills. We were then shewn the hop store (which rather surprisingly housed some pockets of seedless European hops for Saxon Lager) and the old coppers.

## Stainless Steel

After this we were shewn the new stainless steel totally enclosed mash tuns, of which we could see very little other than the exterior and also the wort cooling tank in the top of the brewery. The hot wort from the coppers used to be pumped into this shallow tank to cool before the yeast was added, but with the advent of refrigeration techniques this process is now used principally to aerate the wort before it is run into the fermenting vessels. Down stairs we saw the modern stainless steel fermenting vessels, some open and some fully enclosed, which are fitted with yeast extractors which automatically draw off measured quantities of the yeasty head which is centrifuged and strained on the floor below. The yeast, depending upon the stage that the brew has reached, is then either run off into tubs for re-use or into large wheeled tanks which are collected by Marnite. The beer released by the centrifuge is returned to the fermenting vessels.

## Beam Engines

The famous beam engines used to pump liquor around the brewery have been out of action during the course of the re-building of the brewery due to health and safety at work requirements, but we were able to see them. Mrs Butler explained that they were operated by steam at 40psi produced by the brewing process. They were designed by Watt and built locally over 110 years ago. The newer of the two is the only one to have broken down and that was only once a few years ago. A firm of marine engineers were called in and they overhauled it for further service.

## Bottles, Casks & Kegs

After this we picked our way through the builders debris in the yard to the bottling hall with its two high speed plants and the draught cellar. The noise in these areas was tremendous - Radio 1 blasting out by the cask washing plant made the bottling hall seem quite quiet. All of this area of the brewery is very modern and was built only a few years ago. Our interest momentarily waned when we were shewn the keggling plant, sacks of plastic caps for the kegs were lying around here. One of them proudly proclaimed 'Ram Keg', a comment that was felt very appropriate.

With the production process followed to its conclusion the time came to see Young's famous shire horses, which are still used on local deliveries because they are cheaper than motor lorries for this kind of work. In the stables the horses were being given their fodder - principally hay with some spent grains from the brewing process added - those that had just returned from deliveries were covered with sacks to keep them warm. In outside stables were the brewery's two largest horses - Henry Cooper at 18½ hands and the younger Samson at 18 hands.

## Menagerie

We saw the rest of the 'Young's Menagerie' consisting of geese, ducks, guinea fowl, a goat and the famous ram, a number of which had been taken in part exchange for retired horses. In one corner of the yard was a pond made by the brewery for its ducks. We could almost imagine the glee with which the 'Grotney Hardmen' would demolish the stables, sell the horses for pet food and kill the ducks and geese were they ever to acquire Young's (God forbid).

## Sample Room

For some, the entire object of the exercise was now to follow. After we had been shewn the old stone sleepers from the Surrey Iron Railway which now bounded the exercise yard used by the shire horse show team we were ushered into the sample room. After 90 minutes of climbing stairs, dodging builder's rubble and enduring Tony Blackburn by the cask washer, a few pints were most welcome - of Young's Bitter, Special or Dark Mild.

## Thanks

Young's and Mrs Butler gave us an excellent afternoon which we sincerely thank them particularly in view of the present upheaval caused by the builders. If any other branch is lucky enough to get around Young's they should take a few pockets of Polo mints along - the horses love them.



## Mac's Visit

Herts. South Branch members have a rare chance to visit McMullen's brewery on Thursday 25 January. Further details from Tony Burns, 11 Turpins Chase, Oaklands, Welwyn. There are only 20 places so if you are interested in this visit book quickly with Tony.



## Membership

Why not join and help us improve the lot of Britain's drinkers.

I wish to become a member of CAMRA Ltd. I agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign. I enclose £4.00 as my annual subscription.

Name . . . . .

Address . . . . .

Please send to: The Membership Secretary, The Campaign for Real Ale, 34 Alma Road, St. Albans, Herts, AL1 3BW  
HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

# Abbot In Sussex

Searching for a suitable stop for lunch while motoring in Sussex recently, my eye was caught by a free house prominently advertising Real Ale, the Sheffield Arms at Sheffield Park. Expecting to find a selection of Sussex brews, perhaps Harvey's or King and Barnes, I was surprised to find that the beer list instead included Greene King Abbot Ale, Paine's bitter, Everard's Tiger, Adnams' bitter and mild, Marston's Pedigree and Owd Roger - more what I would have expected to find in an enterprising Hertfordshire Free House. The feeling of "I've been here before" was heightened when I noticed on the walls a display of photographs and press cuttings about that famous Hertfordshire Free House, the Barley Mow at Tyttenhanger.

## The Herts Connection

All became clear when I established that the landlord of the Sheffield Arms was Mr Thomas Simpson, a previous owner of the Barley Mow, who informed me that he brought all his beers down to Sussex by lorry every week, from Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. He also told me that he had bought and re-licensed the New Found Out Inn at Hitchin, which is at present unoccupied and in need of repair. Because of the lack of time to carry out these repairs Mr Simpson has recently sold the pub but he understands that the new owner is keen to complete the re-building and re-open the pub as soon as possible.

BY PETER LERNER.

## Ex-Brewery Saved

The old Ware brewery has been saved from demolition at a recent Council meeting. As reported in an earlier Newsletter, the present owners, Brown and Son, Builders Merchants, wanted to demolish the building which is being used currently as a builder's store. Permission was refused on the basis that:

1. The siting design and massing of the former brewery building, its relationship with the former maltings at the rear and small scale residential buildings to the north, form a unique and visually important feature and its demolition would largely destroy the character of the northern part of the Ware Conservation Area.
2. The demolition of this building would reduce still further the examples of Ware's former importance as a brewing centre in the 19th and early part of the 20th century and would consequently assist the erosion of the town's character which the local authority are vigorously attempting to preserve and enhance through their involvements in 'Vivat Ware' (the local enhancement scheme for Ware).
3. Insufficient evidence has been submitted to show that the building is incapable of restoration and of a continued useful life so as to justify its demolition.

Dave Burns' letter on behalf of CAMRA's Herts South Branch, which brought attention to the history of the brewery, was submitted to the hearing. The saving of the building can be seen as a welcome victory for conservation.

## JUBILEE ALES

A customer at the Woodman, Chapmore End, has 40 different Jubilee Ales up for sale. If you are a collector give landlord Pip a call, who will be able to give you further details.

# PUB NEWS

Clay Hill The Fallow Buck now also sells Ind Coope Bitter alongside Burton Ale.

Datchworth The Inn on the Green has dropped Everard's Tiger Bitter replacing it with Marston's Pedigree.

New Barnet The Duke of Lancaster is now selling Courage Director's Bitter on handpump.

Nuthampstead The Woodman has recently installed handpumps which are now dispensing Greene King IPA, Courage Director's and Tolly Cobbold Cantab.

Park Street The Red Lion is selling Ind Coope Bitter in place of Burton Ale.

Rickmansworth The Coach and Horses is now selling Greene King Abbot Ale on electric pump. However, the IPA, which has a similar bar fitting, is on top pressure.

St. Albans (i) The Cock, in Hatfield Road, now sells Wethered's Bitter on handpump. (ii) The King Harry has withdrawn Burton Ale but has replaced it with Bitter and it is hoped that handpumped mild will follow shortly. (iii) The White Swan's previously dormant handpumps are again working - to dispense Ind Coope Burton Ale and Bitter.

Stevenage (i) The Fisherman, at Fisher's Green, has re-opened with Ind Coope Burton Ale and Bitter on handpumps. (ii) The Royal Oak, in the Old Town, is now selling handpumped McMullen's Country Bitter.

Watton at Stone (i) The Waggon and Horses has discontinued Ind Coope Burton Ale. Bitter is now on the handpump. (ii) It is expected that The Bull, another Ind Coope pub, will shortly be selling real ale.

## DRAW PRIZES

Winners of prizes in the Herts South Branch Christmas Draw are as follows:

- 1st Gary Watts from Herts North Branch, Ticket No. A0035 who won a firkin of ale & a turkey.
- 2nd G.Redding, c/o Eric Sim (A2569), firkin of ale.
- 3rd Mr Richards, 23 Fairways, Waltham Abbey (A0068), Bottle of Vintage Port.
- 4th A.L.Brown, 21 Warwick Road, Stevenage (A2926) Tankard.
- 5th J.Milligan, Rose and Crown, St.Albans (A1630) CAMRA Membership.
- 6th D.S.Renshaw, 14 Green Lane, Amersham, Bucks. (A1210) CAMRA Calendar.
- 7th 132 Fellows Road, London, NW3 (A1311) Wine.
- 8th B.East c/o P.Foy (A2759) Liqueurs.
- 9th M.Carce 801 2693 (A0810) 'Beer Naturally'
10. C.C.George, 192 Park Ave, Bushey (A1009) Box of Chocolates.
11. Andy Gascow (A0775) Bottle of Beer.
12. B.Levane (A2502) Bottle of Beer.
13. S.Bone c/o Eric Sim (A2559) Bottle of Watney's Pale Ale - what a lucky fellow.

## A.G.M.

The draw was made at the branch's AGM held last month at the Crown in St.Albans. The meeting proved to be the usual rumboustious affair but branch members were saddened to hear of the resignation of branch chairman Jim Axford and committee member Adrian Green. Jim chaired the branch during the last year and previously was Publicity Officer. Adrian co-ordinated the last two Hertfordshire Beer Festivals. Both Jim and 'Ade' will be greatly missed and the branch would like to thank them for all their efforts in the past. Eric Sim was elected to the committee and one position remains to be filled.

560-4121 UNXKEEP

15TH MARCH

# Pirton 100%

As we enter 1979 it is well worth mentioning that all three public houses in the village of Pirton now sell handpumped beer with a combined selection of no less than seven real ales.

In fact over the Christmas period there were 8 if you include the cask of Rayment's BBA won by local CAMRA member Gary Watts, by courtesy of the Hertfordshire South Branch Christmas Draw - nice one Gary.

## Cat and Fiddle

The Cat and Fiddle of course has always sold the real thing as every edition of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide will testify. Charles Wells Fargo and Bitter are the beers available and the popularity of this splendid village local can be witnessed any time.

## Motte and Bailey

On the other side of the green stands the Motte and Bailey, formerly the White Horse which was sold by Whitbread and has recently re-opened after extensive alterations. From my own point of view it is nothing but good to see a free house selling local beers as well as those from outside the area. Greene King Abbot and IPA together with Adnam's Bitter are served from hand-pumps while from Newark, Westcrown Regal Bitter is poured direct from the cask.

## The Fox

Last but not least we turn to The Fox, currently under temporary management. I suppose with all the other handpump activity in the village Whitbread had no option but to compete, resulting in the sudden appearance of a handpump serving the tasty Wethered's Bitter complete with a most attractive pump clip and advertising placards, and sold at a very reasonable price indeed. The Fox is a traditional village pub in every sense of the word, and along with the other two pubs are worthy of an instant pub crawl, any offers?

## Secretive

Whitbread have always been very secretive regarding the installation of handpumps in their public houses, which always results in local real ale drinkers being left totally ignorant of the fact until after the event. Therefore will the 'powers that be' at Luton consider meeting or corresponding with local CAMRA branches which can only result in mutual benefit for all concerned.  
BY DENNIS ROBERTSON.

# Blunder in Ricky

Imagine my embarrassment when, on a recent Greene King pub campaign evening, I discovered that the Coach and Horses in Rickmansworth was already serving Abbot by a CAMRA approved method - electric pump. The landlord, John Betts, has had a brewery supplied electric pump for several months, linked up to his Abbot without CO2 and supplied to both public and saloon bars from the backroom cellar. He hopes, in the near future, to be able to serve Greene King IPA and KK Mild on electric pump. In spite of my difference of opinion with John over the derivation of real ale, we were both in agreement on the excellence of his Abbot, served without CO2, in a pub where the exterior does little justice to the charm and character of the interior.

If you don't believe me, go in and see for yourselves (go and check even if you do believe me!).  
BY JIM AXFORD.

# What's On

## HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

- 16 Jan January Branch Meeting  
The Red Lion, Radlett (Greene King and Bass) 8pm.
- 25 Jan Branch Brewery Visit to McMullen's. Page 2 has further information.

## HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH BRANCH

- 16 Jan January Branch Meeting  
The Roebuck, Stevenage (Rayment's) 8pm.
- 17 Jan Campaigning Social at The New Inn, Holwell (Greene King) 8pm.
- 24 Jan Campaigning Social at The Boar's Head, Royston, (Greene King) 8pm.
- 31 Jan Social at The Royal Oak, Stevenage. 8pm. (McMullen's).

## HERTS/ESSEX BORDERS BRANCH

- 15 Jan January Branch Meeting  
The Queen's Head, Sheering (McMullen's) Starting 8pm.
- 22 Jan Social at The Windmill, Thundridge. 8pm. (McMullen's).
- 19 Feb February Branch Meeting  
The Rose and Crown, Cheshunt (Ind Coope) Starting 8pm.

# Branch Contacts:

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Dennis Robertson Tel: Stevenage 782779 (Home)

## HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

Dave Burns Tel: Welwyn 7805 (Home)

## HERTS/ESSEX BORDERS BRANCH

Rob Candlish Tel: Waltham X 32045 (Home)

# Newsletter

The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced monthly by the Herts South, Herts North and Herts/Essex Borders branches of CAMRA. Any current information, news or articles will be gratefully received. Editor: Les Middlewood, 81a Linden Way, Southgate, London, N14 4NG. The far west of the county is covered in more detail by the Mid-Chilterns Newsletter which is available from Tim Amsden, Mermaid Cottage, Hawridge Common, Chesham.

Further copies of the Hertfordshire Newsletter are available from the Editor - send a SAE.

Printed by Kenmar Press, Sidney Road, Wood Green, London, N22 4LS. Tel: 01-888 7221.

# PENRHOS WEEKEND

This year's Herts South branch brewery trip weekend will be to Kington in Herefordshire, home of Penrhos Court Brewery. The weekend (Friday 2 to Sunday 4 March) will provide ample opportunity to sample other local brews. An itinerary is at present being drawn up and further details will appear next month. Meanwhile if you wish to provisionally book a place please contact Tony Burns Tel: Welwyn 7805 (home). It is anticipated that the cost of the weekend will be in the region of £20, which will include coach transport, bed and breakfast in a hotel for two nights and an evening meal on the Friday night.